

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, November 12. 1692. Licens'd, E. B.



Quest. 1. **A** Young Gentlewoman Married, and in a few years was left a Widow, her Father took both her, and her Children home, and maintained them all. Her Mother had a Pearl Necklace worth 300 l. which was left at a Goldsmiths for some time, for which at length she sent her aforesaid Daughter to fetch home: Accordingly she went, and by the way concluded with her self to keep the Necklace, and to tell her Parents her Pocket was picked of it coming home, which she did with all the signs of a great and real Sorrow; she pretended not to sleep in some Nights, and wept extremely for a long time, which made her Mother and Father to believe her. The Question in Dispute is, Whether it was not as great a Theft in her to wrong her Mother, as it would have been if it had been any ones else: She alledges for her self her Father gave her no Fortune, we desire your Judgment if that can excuse her?

Ans. Theft is Theft, however Circumstantiated; and 'tis (instead of being the better) much worse when we steal from, or injure our Benefactors: When according to our English Proverb, *I make bold with my Friend*, 'tis under this reasonable Presumption, that either the Matter is so inconsiderable, (and so agreed upon by the General Notion of the World,) that 'tis not worth the telling him of it; or else, that if he knew, he would not be displeas'd, and the opportunity would slip before I could ask his Consent. But the Case here is very different, all Methods being taken to secure the knowledge of the Fact, as also a deal of Lyes and Hypocrisie to disguise it, and make it appear something else. Vertue never sculks in the dark, nor needs any Excuses; but Vice, as Conscious of its base and mean demerits, improves all Methods to keep it self unknown: Nor will the Excuse brought in the Question extenuate, but heighten the Crime; for if a Parent gives not me what I think convenient, I ought not to take away his Prerogative of Disposal, and wrest the Paternal Power out of his hands; if I can perswade him to it by Reason, or the Intercession of my Friends, or (which is best) carry my self so towards him, as to win upon him by my Dutiful Behaviour, I do all that I can in the Case, and can sit down with this Satisfaction, *That I am not the worse for deserving well*. Restitution and Repentance towards God and Parents in this Case is absolutely necessary, if Pardon and Innocence be so.

Quest. 2. *Messieurs, Dés que j'ariveroy en ce pais je fis connoissance avec une daimoiselle qui a beaucoup de Merit, Sans autre dessein, &c.*

Gentlemen, Since I came into this Countrey, I addressed my self to a young Lady of Great Merit, without any other design than to spend some agreeable Moments in her Conversation; I have enjoy'd all the pleasures of Wit and Good Humour for above 6 months, and now at last Love puts in for a Disturber, for she now discovers the most violent passion for me, and altho I esteem her infinitely, yet I can't love her enough to make her my Wife; I am at a loss what to do, I would not disoblige her, much less reduce her to despair, and yet I can't resolve to love her. Gentlemen, if you please to assist me with your good Advice in the Affair, you will do me a very sensible Favour, and remove the Impatience of, &c.

Ans. We thought it convenient to put the Substance of this Letter in English, that no one might be at a loss for the meaning of it. Our Answer is, That if the Gentleman can't be won by so much Merit, nor answer to great Passion as he is perswaded she has for him, that he treat her as honourably as he can, by telling her the Truth, that he should be very happy in her Friendship, but in a nearer Relation he can't, for some Reasons which no alteration either in her Person or

Fortunes could remove. Such a Protest as this would take away those hopes which administer Fuel to her Flame; if this won't do, make fewer Visits, and if that also proves successless, you may honourably (her happiness being the Motive) break off all pretensions for any further Visits. This we think a much more honourable and fair Method, than any little idle Excuses, which are frequently made in such Cases by the Generality of Persons.

Quest. 3. *Pray Gentlemen what is the Reason why a Person when he fires a Gun with his Thumb on the Barrel, the Gun flies? Some ill Accidents have happened on this Account, therefore pray your Advice speedily, (now Winter is coming on) that no further Damage may be on that Score?*

Ans. The Vibration, or Motion caus'd in the Piece, may be stop't in any place of the Barrel, which upon it's sudden Recoil has often the unhappy Event mention'd in the Question. Thus any piece of sounding Metall, being touch't by the hand, gives over sounding immediately. There are some affirm, (how truly we know not) That a Bell ty'd about the Waste with a Rope, will break in Ringing: 'Tis certain that this hindrance of Vibration, (which is nothing else but Motion briskly communicated to every particle of a Body, either by the violence of a Stroke or Sound, &c.) will have Events very incredible to such as have made no Tryals in these Cases. A Barrel ty'd round with a Rope, or a weight laid upon it in the time of Thunder, will stop the Vibration, and consequently hinder that Motion in the Beer, &c. which causes a sudden fermentation, and lowers it.

Quest. 4. *Whether it be a breach of Charity, or whether it be our Duty, to prevent the starving of Persons, by supplying their wants, when at the same time we are very well assured that they are in as good a Capacity, or better than our selves, but want a Heart to make use of it, and will rather destroy themselves than spend a Farthing, tho as was said before, they have a plentiful Estate?*

Ans. We can't believe any one in his Wits so great a Fool: But supposing such a Case, we think instead of feeding him, when he has Meat before him, (or which is all one, can procure it) all the Duty incumbent upon us, is, to lay before him his unreasonableness and Impiety, and the necessity of being Charitable himself, for no one can go to Heaven without intentional or actual Charity; how far the Covetous Persons Condition is from either, is too visible, by every one that is not a Hater of thinking.

Quest. 5. *There is a Gentlewoman not far from the City, who has the misfortune to be Married to a jealous Old Coxcomb, who besides a great deal of other ill usage, forces her to wear an ITALIAN PADLOCK. Now I desire to know, whether it be not an entrenchment upon the Liberty of the Free-born English She-Subject? and whether this horrid Custom be to be endured in England? and whether a Wives Duty here in England obliges her to such a Compliance with her Husband to suffer this Barbarity from him? This Relation is true de facto, as I said in my Letter, desiring that this Popish Innovation might be made publick.*

Ans. This is one of the Questions deliver'd by the Mask'd Lady, who (in her Letter Dated about Octob. 28.) not only assures us of the Truth of the Relation, but gives us a very particular Account of the Parties concern'd, and the place of their abode, which we shall say nothing of here, being willing to be as Tender of the Reputation of the Persons concern'd as can consist with our Design of Exposing Vice. — Our Answer is, That perhaps this Jealous Person mentioned in the Question, being Conscious of his own Pranks, it makes him afraid least by the Talion Law he should be paid in his own Coin, or be beaten by the Scabbard, which he has found as good

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Metal as the Blade, Experience having taught him, that Locks, Necklaces, Amulets, &c. are no Spells against Backsliding, and perhaps he has read of those who have Consulted the Devil by those terrible words, *Oderdam, Birdam, Girdam*, to Conjure him up to assist them; or perhaps may have heard of the Vertues of the Powder of the Bone of the right side of an Owl, put into a Nushell, but these Mysteries are not proper to be divulged. What Arguments were used so forcibly to persuade her Consent to this Barbarous Usage, is not related; its a stricter Doctrine than *Clostrall Chastity*, and may have its use against the Danger of Ravishments, and be Proof against all Assaults. What Discourses have been made about these Padlocks have not come to our Ken; some Almanacks remember when they came first into England; and among the Choice Legacies bequeathed by Sir Henry Wotton, these Padlocks are Inventory'd in his Will, as the Writer of his Life acquaints us: But in England the Laws to Punish the Levities and Apostacies of Women are the Rules to walk by here, therefore She may refuse, unless she submits to this Imprisonment to atone for some Transgression. Naturalists boast there is a certain Herb, which applied to Fetters, Locks, &c. presently unlooses them; but the Italian way is, the *Privado* slips it off while she hangs by a Swing, and so may she, any Law, Usage or Custom to the contrary notwithstanding. The other Question is Answer'd in Writing.

Quest. 6. The Area of an Equilateral Triangle being given, viz. 180. What is the side thereof?

Ans. We have had this Question sent us several times, and sometimes in such a triumphing Language, as if they had not only puzzled us but all the World besides, if they knew a Method how to propose it so publickly. We have here return'd the Answer, as we hope, rather to the satisfaction than silence of the Proposers, being very willing to keep Correspondence with all Ingenious Analysts: And tho' we have not those Opportunities to publish things of this Nature in our Paper so oft as we wou'd, yet we shou'd not fail to encourage a Correspondence by private Letters, and sometimes thus publickly.

Set one foot of the Compasses in any Equilateral Triangle, and then the Radius is made one of its sides, or a Chord of 60. Let drop a Perpendicular from any of the three Angles upon the opposite side, it bisects it into two equal Parts, making the Versed sine 30. Suppose we now the Diameter to be $2R$, (or twice the Radius:) The versed sine U , and the perpendicular P . by 13 Prop. Eucl. El. lib. 6. the sine (or Perpendicular we first seek for) is a mean proportional between the Segments of the Diameter on which it stands Erect; therefore $2R - U \times U = 2RU - UU$, whose Square root is the Perpendicular sought, viz. $V: 2RU - UU = P$. which being found out, we see what Proportion the side of an Equilateral Triangle bears to the aforesaid Perpendicular that equally bisects it; which Proportion we'll call r to s . and then this New Question results, There are two Numbers whose ratio is r to s , and if half the greater be drawn into the lesser, it gives $(180)Z$. What's the great Number? half the greater is made the base, and the rectangle made of that and the Perpendicular is equal to the two New Triangles, seeing the half of it is equal to one of them.

1. Suppose the greater $\frac{a}{r}$
2. Then for the lesser. $r, s :: a, \frac{sa}{r}$
3. Which last being multip. by $\frac{a}{2}$ gives $\frac{saa}{2r}$
4. From whence the Equation $\frac{saa}{2r} = Z$
5. Or $saa = 2rz$
6. Or $aa = \frac{2rz}{s}$
7. Whose square root Answers } $a = V \frac{2rz}{s}$
the Question, viz. $\frac{2rz}{s}$

From whence arises this Theorem, the side of any Equilateral Triangle is equal to the Square root of the given Area multiply'd into twice the Term of the greater ratio divided by the Term of the lesser ratio, viz. 60 and 61.9+.

Proof. The Proportion between the side of an Equilateral Triangle, and a Perpendicular dropt from any Angle of it is 60. to 51.961524+, therefore according to the Theorem $V: 2 \times 60 \times 180 = 20.3885+$ which is

51.9615+
the side of an Equilateral Triangle whose Area is 180. Now for a New Perpendicular as 60, 51.961524 :: 20.3885, 17.656958. which last is the New Perpendicular, therefore the half of 20.3885+ viz. 10.1942 x 17.656958 = 179.99+ or 180, which was to be done. We need not add what great Use this Theorem may be of to Surveyors, in places inaccessible for Ponds, Rivers, Marshes, &c.

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